

SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES

The Official Organ of the South African Library Association

Vol. 12

July 1944

No. 1

SYMPOSIUM ON SPECIALIST LIBRARIES¹

THE TRANSVAAL CHAMBER OF MINES LIBRARY

Mrs. P. COLDREY

PERHAPS if I were to say something about the Chamber of Mines first, it would throw light on what might be expected to be found in its Library.

"The Chamber is a body which, through the medium of a staff headed by specialists, handles the centralized activities of the mines and deals with the problems which are common to the industry as a whole. These problems include labour matters (European and non-European); technical questions (such as those connected with mining regulations); parliamentary and legal matters (including legislation); health conditions on the mines, including dust-allaying and ventilation; the scrutiny of patent applications; taxation, accounting questions, and the collection of statistics."²

The eminence of the gold mining industry rests not only on the richness and extent of the gold deposits of the Witwatersrand, but also on the achievements of the industry's technical experts. Many inquirers seem disappointed that the Chamber's Library is not an impressive technical library and primarily a technical library. The technical achievements of the industry, however, have not come from a centralized research body, except in the case of timber research. They have come rather from individual experts or groups of experts. Each mining house or group has a department which, although not usually called a library, nearly approaches that in its functions. The technical book holdings of the industry are, therefore, spread over the industry and are not centralized in the Chamber's Library. The Chamber's Library has only a small number

of textbooks and these are somewhat limited in range. But it does take a wide selection of the *Transactions* of technical societies and technical periodicals from overseas, and these are made available to all interested throughout the industry. What we call a *Technical extract* is circulated monthly—it is merely a list of the contents of the technical papers received each month, which are loaned in order of application. The number of borrowings arising out of the circulation of this *Extract* would seem to indicate that it fulfils a very useful service.

The Library is organized in the main, however, to supply within the mining industry information on economic policy, labour matters, regulations, legislation, and so on. Its holdings comprise a good section on South Africa: official blue books, parliamentary debates, bills, statutes, and regulations; South African mining and trade journals and directories; trade union journals; selected histories, biographies, and even novels on South Africa; and publications on Native affairs representative of all shades of opinion. All statutes are annotated year by year by the Library staff, and in the case of Acts of special interest, such as the Miners' Phthisis Act, Mines and Works Act, and Income Tax Act, these are fully amended to date for quick and accurate reference. Wage agreements and the Emergency Regulations are similarly annotated and kept on ready file. A comprehensive selection of South African newspapers is also taken. These are read and cuttings widely circulated to interested officials.

Our interest is not confined to South African affairs. We endeavour to keep up to date with developments overseas and receive all the publications of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office (these series are complete); selected British newspapers, periodicals, and government publications; certain American pub-

¹ General meeting of the Southern Transvaal Branch of the South African Library Association, held on 5. April 1944, at the University of the Witwatersrand.

² "The Transvaal Chamber of Mines and its subsidiary organizations: a few notes regarding their history and activities." Jhb: The Chamber, 1936. 11p.

lications; and Australian and New Zealand official publications including the statutes, wage awards, and industrial gazettes.

Whilst our indexing system does not follow any recognized library system, it is found to be adequate to meet our particular requirements. Furthermore, the Library does not work in isolation—it co-operates closely with the Correspondence Department, and that Department's comprehensive filing system is available to us, as also other Departments' indexes. Whilst an adequate index of our holdings is, of course, essential, experience has shown that it is just as essential that we should know something of what lies between the covers. This does not necessitate our reading everything as received, but rather an "intelligent scanning through" of blue books, periodicals, and pamphlets. We ourselves try to foresee developments, but we are greatly assisted by the officials drawing our attention to possible future requirements. We try not only to have information available when called for, but also to bring information, as it is received, to the attention of those officials of our own and other mining offices who may be interested. We have, of course, always to bear in mind that the officials are busy men and not to be troubled needlessly, but at the same time we have to try and avoid anything that may prove important being overlooked. We have often been surprised at the interest displayed in some of the information we had hesitated to pass on.

There are some aspects of the Library which may be of special interest. We have many early publications such as *The South African mining journal*—a complete series since its inception; a complete file of *The Star*, *Rand daily mail*, *Cape times*, and *London Times* since 1902; early pamphlets and many early blue books. We also have a record of companies floated in the Union.

The early records cover only mining companies and go back to the 1890's. All companies are included now. In some cases these records contain information about early amalgamations and have been found useful not only for the recorded information but in limiting the period to be covered in a search for further information. Some very interesting facts were culled from these records in connexion with an inquiry from the Africana Museum about the first attempts at mining lead in the Transvaal.

Since companies have been spoken of, it should be mentioned that the Chamber is in no way connected with share market movements despite the popular misconception that such "movements take place in accordance with decisions of the Chamber's committees".¹ A few general books dealing with the stock exchange, such as will be found in the finance section of any public library, will, however, also be found in the Chamber's Library.

Like most specialist libraries, we find we cannot limit ourselves to immediate or direct requirements. Various textbooks on economic history and economics which the younger men in the Chamber find useful in their studies will be found on our shelves, and periodicals of general interest to students are taken and circulated. Then there are the general inquiries, so we naturally keep current issues of general quick-reference books such as *Whitaker's almanac*, the *Statesman's yearbook*, the Automobile Association's *Handbook*, maps and an atlas, an encyclopaedia, a Bible, Benham's and the *Oxford Book of quotations*, and many similar works.

I would like to acknowledge our indebtedness to other libraries for their unfailing help by way of information and loans. We welcome any opportunity which enables us to reciprocate.

THE LIBRARY OF THE TRANSVAAL BRANCH OF THE S.A. RED CROSS

Miss J. E. HASTED

THE Transvaal Red Cross Library was only organized as such in August of 1943. Owing to the complexity of Red Cross work it was decided to appoint an experienced senior officer to the post of librarian instead of engaging a qualified librarian from outside. The entire library staff is now receiving the necessary training.

¹ Ibid.

* Certain subjects, such as aid to prisoners of war and instruction in home nursing, at once spring to the mind as Red Cross interests, but the range is much wider than this. The library tries to cover all Red Cross interests all over the world, and also all local matters in which the Transvaal Branch of the S.A. Red Cross is, or might later be interested.

It sometimes surprises people that there is no detailed world-wide uniformity of work in the sixty odd national Red Cross Societies. This is not an error or defect, but the logical outcome of the growth of Red Cross. The national societies were founded—are still being founded—over a wide time range, and in countries in widely differing states of social organization. It stands to reason, therefore, that the National Red Cross of any country will from time to time interest itself in the problems still not being tackled in its own country. One of the great original efforts of our Society, for instance, is in mining first aid. In America, disaster relief was from the first one of Red Cross's major activities.

It is also a Red Cross practice to act as a "pioneer column", opening new fields of work and gladly leaving them when the country as a whole has been so awakened to the need that the Government undertakes the work. The outstanding example is aid to wounded lying on the field of battle, one of the very first Red Cross activities, in fact, the mainspring of all others.

Under the noble inspiration of the heroic Swiss, M. Henri Dunant, Red Cross detachments were actually trained to roam the battlefields, gather and tend wounded in the front line, and transport them to safety and hospital care. The need was proved. Now, no modern army lacks its Medical Corps, and it would indeed be extraordinary if Red Cross first aiders wandered into the battle area on their own. Another example is the initiative of the Canadian Red Cross in demonstrating at its own expense the value of rural nursing.

The field to be covered is thus wide and indefinite.

Red Cross in the Transvaal has always possessed a library. The Secretariat, which twenty years ago was the only "operating" department, acquired the books it needed, and sister societies sent their periodicals. Time went on, and the Branch became a citizen state with many more or less autonomous departments some of which were listed. Each of these acquired more reference material, subscribed to periodicals, and collected data. Finally, to avoid duplication but more particularly to make known what was available and to add to the collections in advance of urgent need, the library itself was instituted.

A very warm tribute was paid to the aid Johannesburg libraries had given in seeing that the foundations were laid on the right lines.

The material at first included came under the headings of books, pamphlets, sample posts, periodicals, annual reports, conference reports,

health reports from our area, material issued by International Red Cross, and local press cuttings. It was briefly described in what manner each of these is handled. The foundation of the classification system is the Sears *List of subject headings for small libraries*, and dictionary order of subject is used for shelving books and for pamphlet boxes. Periodicals are arranged chronologically after cataloguing of specially interesting articles. Press cuttings are, which is perhaps a surprise, filed chronologically under the paper concerned, after the individual cuttings have been seen by all concerned and classified on the card index where the subject requires it. This is because the basis of Red Cross interest is the district as a whole, and it makes for simple reference if any department can be shown the complete cuttings file for any area, which mostly gives a very good idea of the area's wants and interests.

The library does not work to a rigid schedule. It is essential to present what is required by any department as soon as the request comes in, but it is equally important not to buy for the sake of buying. A constant watch is kept for new material and expert decisions are taken where necessary.

In other ways, too, the library routines and regulations are less rigid than in general practice. For instance, although the real borrowers are the main departments in Red Cross House, no rule has been laid down. In time, data will have accumulated, showing who may wish to use the library, and Red Cross practice is not to build high fences round its services but to encourage all those who need its aid to come and make their wants known. One unexpected development was the interest shown by junior staff members, who have been given certain facilities, provided that material borrowed remains in the building and is, therefore, instantly available. Red Cross work is interesting beyond all description, but naturally not every job in a big organization is equally absorbing and juniors on humdrum and routine work are more interested if they are able to get glimpses of the movement as a tremendous whole.

The classification system, too, has been kept fluid and no final decision taken as to which of the great numerical systems finally will be adopted. The local libraries with which close contact is maintained are divided between Dewey and Library of Congress, and for that reason it is probable that in the future one or other of these classification systems will be chosen.

Valuable advice was sought and offered on circulation problems, notably in connexion with periodicals. This is particularly difficult to

organize, as so much field work is done, necessitating absence from Red Cross House for irregular periods at irregular intervals of senior officials who particularly rely upon the library.

THE LIBRARY OF THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mrs. B. J. LUNN

THERE are one or two preliminary remarks I wish to make.

Firstly, the entire work of establishing the library, the choice of book stock, the choice of the classification system, the selection of the shelving, the organization of periodicals, and all the preliminary thought that goes towards the building up of a library, is the work of my predecessor Miss Hazel Mews, who worked at the job for nearly two years and to whom all credit for the library's service is due, while I have merely been there now for a few months, carrying on from where she left off.

The second preliminary remark concerns the Corporation itself. Its work is of a highly confidential nature which naturally precludes any comment on its detailed activities, making my task to-day somewhat difficult.

The Corporation, of course, welcomes discussion on its work in general, but it has to take care of confidences reposed in it by private enterprise submitting propositions for financial assistance, in the same way as any large financial house. You will understand then, that any examples I may give of the type of inquiry I receive will be wholly imaginary. If I were to tell you, e.g., that I had been asked for a formula for purple dye, you will understand that the Corporation does not, therefore, wish to open a dye factory.

The Industrial Development Corporation was established by a special Act of Parliament (Act No. 22 of 1940) and the heading reads: "Act to constitute a corporation the object of which shall be to promote the establishment of new industries and industrial undertakings, and the development of existing industries and industrial undertakings, and to provide for other incidental matters." The I.D.C. is governed by a board of directors, some of whom are appointed by the Government, and others elected by the shareholders.

The library exists solely to supply technical literature and information to the staff. There are engineers, industrial chemists, economists, statisticians, accountants, textile experts, and the like

employed by the Corporation. The book stock consists of about 600 volumes and the same number of blue books and pamphlets, while a further 400 odd are on order but have not yet arrived. The policy has been to buy *the* standard work on every subject in which the Corporation is interested, and supplementary material as required. In addition, we subscribe to approximately sixty technical and trade journals, to the *Government gazette*, and to the leading local daily papers, both pro- and anti-Government. The work of making this information available to members of the I.D.C. staff has two main aspects, which I will call the passive and active functions. In the first place every technical library, once established, handles a certain amount of information which flows to it automatically in different ways (i.e. information in serials and abstracts, etc.) which it is required to record and file in an appropriate manner and to disseminate to its clientele. This may be regarded as the *passive* function. Without, however, belittling the value of this side of its work in sorting out appropriately such information as naturally comes to it, no really efficient library can be content with passive work alone. Of at least equal importance is its active function of going after the information required, anticipating the needs of its clientele, and watching for developments. It is this type of work which makes the biggest demands on the department, requiring not only a flair for sources of knowledge, but also an intimate knowledge of the needs of the organization and its development. All the periodicals we receive are paged through, any articles likely to be of interest are read, and if it is then considered that the article is important, its title and pagination are noted on a slip which is attached to the cover of the periodical, and it is circulated to the various departments. If an article is considered to be of more than ephemeral interest, an analytical entry is made in the catalogue.

The library is classified by the Dewey system, and has a subject catalogue. Standard cataloguing rules are adhered to, but the collation is not given in full.

A card index to the *Government gazette* is made, in which full entries and cross-references are made under subject headings. This includes practically everything in the *Gazette* with the exception, of course, of such matters as brand-marks for cattle in the Orange Free State. Separate files of control measures, and industrial agreements and wage determinations are also kept. Every reference librarian, or any person who works regularly with the *Gazette* will realize how necessary the index is. If one had to rely on the sketchy index issued with the *Gazette*, it would take one some time to find a specific notice or proclamation.

Files of newspaper cuttings are also kept. These are put in ordinary letter-file covers, kept in place with metal clips, and housed in a metal filing cabinet. They are also classified according to Dewey. Book loans are recorded on book cards which are filed alphabetically, according to author. Two cards are issued for each book, the second one being filed under the name of the person to whom the book is issued, so that one can easily tell how many books are issued to each member of staff. Naturally, overdue reminders are not sent out, but we call at the various offices. A certain amount of difficulty sometimes occurs, as members of staff have a habit of lending books to other members of staff without having the loan properly recorded, and when a book is urgently required one sometimes has to call at two or three offices in succession to recover it.

New publications are ordered from reviews in the technical journals, or from suggestions from various members of staff. Here a certain amount of care and tact must be exercised, as the various specialists are apt to regard their particular subject as the only one of consequence and to recommend, with little discrimination, long lists of books, particularly so if they are "library-conscious".

Once a month a roneoed *Technical press review* is issued by the Library. This is an 8- to 12-page publication containing an alphabetical list of articles likely to be of interest to members of the I.D.C. staff. The headings follow as far as possible those used in the *Industrial arts index*, and a few news items are given every month, as well

as a monthly list of accessions to the library. The librarian arranges the material, but most of the selection is done by the technicians on the staff. Books are usually ordered by letter, and one waits until there is sufficient material to compile a book-list. This is done irregularly. Urgent material is ordered by phone, and there is fortunately no "red tape" in the procedure.

These then are the regular daily and weekly routines. Specific requests are dealt with as they are received, and I may mention that for this work the *Industrial arts index* is my Bible. "Short" queries, i.e. those which can be solved by a single reference to a handbook or dictionary, are frequent. Questions such as "What is the boiling point of calcium", or the meaning of "azeotropic", are common. A daily queries book is kept, in which an entry is made for every unusual question and how it was answered. I must here acknowledge my indebtedness to the Reference Department of the Johannesburg Public Library. Practically every day I am asked something or other for which our present limited stock is inadequate. This means that material has to be borrowed from the Johannesburg Public Library, and Miss Elliott has been most co-operative in allowing us to borrow an unlimited number of books and periodicals, for which we are very grateful.

Sometimes members of staff come for information which is for private use, and not strictly relevant to their duties, but naturally one always tries to provide the information, as it all helps to encourage the library habit. Examples of such questions asked lately are: "What is the symbolic significance of the various methods of Japanese flower arrangement?" and "A recipe for the extermination of fish-moths".

Thus it may be seen that provision is being made for the systematic handling of the mass of published information which may be of potential service to the I.D.C. Without the provision of a library this task would largely have been left to the efforts of individual sections, with inevitable waste and overlapping of effort, as well as serious risks of important information on borderline subjects being overlooked.

THE STAR REFERENCE LIBRARY

Miss D. M. PHILIP

The Star Reference Library, so-called, is not a library but a records or filing department, in

which cuttings from *The Star* and various other newspapers are filed. *The Star* has bound files

of *The Times*, with its comprehensive index, so it is not necessary to cut loose copies of this paper.

Cuttings are pasted onto foolscap sheets of paper, stamped with the date and name of the paper from which they are cut, classified, and filed in visible-index-tab folders which are kept in four-drawer steel cabinets. The filing department has no card index to the files (save in the case of leaders and crimes), relying upon copious cross-references which are made on the red cards used for dividing the files.

Absent cards are placed in the files when matter is given out to members of the editorial staff, and a large book is kept for noting all files or reference books given out: i.e. *Date, Subject, To Whom, By Whom, Date of Return*. The classification is mainly geographical, with a few subjects of international interest:—

Geographical. British Empire: Dominions, Colonies, Mandates.

Foreign Countries.

Union of South Africa.

Subjects. Astronomy, Archaeology, Aviation, Medical Science, Shipping, Trade, etc.

Biographical.

The war has naturally made an enormous addition to the files and the cuttings have been divided into Countries, International Affairs, and The Campaign, all filed in special War cabinets.

International Affairs include: International Law and Violations thereof, e.g. Axis Atrocities, Flights over Neutral Countries, etc.; Blockade, Finance, Internment, Peace Aims, Prize Courts, Shipping, Trade, Treaties, etc., Allies' War Policy, Allies' Defence, East Asia, Middle East, Supplies, etc.; also Allied Military Government of Occupied Territory and United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Association.

The Campaign: Casualties, Prisoners, Refugees.

Air. Attacks on different countries by Allies. Attacks on different countries by Enemy.

Land. Africa. Far East. Europe. Russia.

Sea. Ships attacked—Commercial. Allied, Enemy, Neutral. Ships attacked—Naval. Allied, Enemy, Neutral. Ships attacked—Convoys. Allied, Enemy. Neutral.

At Sea. Combined Air, Sea, and Land attacks on Enemy Strongholds.

Union of South Africa

Cuttings are filed under Subjects A-Z.

Government reports are filed on open steel shelves. Government Gazettes are filed in cupboards with glass doors. These gazettes, since the war, have given a lot of extra work because of war measures and Emergency Regulations, which are constantly referred to.

Parliament. Bound copies of *Hansard* are kept but, for quick reference, cuttings are filed of all speeches of members, both in and out of Parliament.

Photos and Blocks

This is a large section of the department and in peace-time is a very busy one. Since the war the paper scarcity has cut down the number of photos appearing in *The Star* to the absolute minimum, but numbers of photos still arrive, and all have to be indexed and filed.

It has not been possible to give more than the dry bones of the work of the department, which, despite much drudgery, is absorbingly interesting; and, as speed is a great factor in a modern newspaper office, the Staff is kept on tiptoes to "deliver the goods" adequately and in time. The queries we get from outsiders are sometimes amazing and, when we are not too busy, quite diverting.

JOHANNESBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY: MUNICIPAL REFERENCE LIBRARY

Mrs. E. M. SINCLAIR

In the *Annual Report* of the Johannesburg Public Library for 1939-40, Mr. R. F. Kennedy sets out the history and purpose of the Municipal Reference Library as follows: "The first Municipal Reference Library to be established in South Africa came into operation in Johannesburg on the 1. July 1938. Its purpose was to collect,

catalogue, index, and arrange books, periodicals, and other material relating to municipal government and the work of the various municipal departments.

"Its original stock consisted of periodicals and books received from various municipal departments, the bound volumes of periodicals dealing

with local government transferred from the Reference Library, and the material formerly housed in the Council's library. The Town Clerk's collection of press cuttings since 1902 was also transferred to it and forms a valuable historical record of municipal progress in Johannesburg. All this material is being augmented by public documents currently received from South African municipalities and leading local authorities in the British Empire and the United States, and by the regular purchase of books and periodicals dealing with municipal affairs. All news items relating to municipal affairs and allied subjects are clipped from the principal South African newspapers and the cuttings filed under subjects. The M.R.L. renders most valuable service to the city by assisting councillors and senior officials to obtain information on the findings and experiences of other municipal authorities when new undertakings are being considered. It also answers questions on a wide range of subjects connected with local government, prepares bibliographies, and supplies the material for officials who are carrying out research in municipal problems."

In present-day practice, it not infrequently happens that inquiries go beyond the specifically administrative field, and the M.R.L. is merely a convenient channel through which the general resources of the Johannesburg Public Library are tapped for the benefit of the denizens of the City Hall. Inquiries are often referred from the Reference Library for students or members of the public who require information of a nature best met from the stock of the M.R.L.

Any library dealing in some minuteness with a particular field must sooner or later adopt or evolve a scheme of close classification for its material. The M.R.L. uses a classification based on the scheme prepared by Frederick N. Macmillin in 1932 for the Library of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities. Macmillin states that his scheme is "suitable only for a library devoted primarily to the field of municipal government", and in point of fact never glances over the fence at neighbouring and related domains. The scheme in use in the M.R.L., while retaining the same main classes—100 Local government, 200 Finance, 300 Public safety, 400 City planning, 500 Public works, 600 Sanitation, 700 Public health and welfare, 800 Municipal enterprise and municipal trading—recognizes that local government does not operate and cannot adequately be studied in a vacuum. It makes provision for general social science, economics, law, etc., between 100 and 109, beginning the allocation for local govern-

ment at 110. This scheme also retains Dewey's 000 and 900 classes in full, and use is made of the common form sub-divisions. It will be recognized that geographical numbers are of particular relevance in that division of sociology known as Municipal Government, and these are freely used throughout, being added within brackets to any classification number.

In view of the difficulty of correlating the material with that of other departments, it has been decided to reclassify the M.R.L. in accordance with Dewey and its expansions.

The routine work of the library includes the marking and heading of items of interest in some eight South African dailies and two weeklies. This growing collection of news-cuttings demands revision from time to time, the closer classification of topics of a complex nature, such as Native affairs, or of increasing topicality, such as ex-servicemen. There is a weekly service of relevant cuttings to individual departments. Periodicals relating to local government are indexed in accordance with the classification scheme, since many of these periodicals do not figure in the general periodicals' indexes, or not soon enough. The Municipal Reference Librarian also has a watching brief for current research work in various fields. (Until the outbreak of the war, regular bulletins were issued, giving not only bibliographies and lists of recent acquisitions, but also excerpts and summaries of topical or special interest. Ten numbers appeared between September 1938 and August 1939). Periodicals of wider range are scanned for book selection, and the gentle art of cadding is much practised, and grows more and more important, as increasing numbers of trade and other organizations plan, research, and publish their often very useful findings on matters which impinge on local government interests and activities or cast light on social problems. Routine library procedures and the answering of inquiries, the effort to maintain unbroken files of minutes, reports, and kindred material, and the indexing of periodicals are sufficient to keep one librarian quite adequately occupied—so that even to-day there is inherited stock which is not fully classified or catalogued, and there is still room for improvement in convenience of actual arrangement.

Queries—apart from the recurring need of reference to particular minutes, by-laws, ordinances, and statutes—are apt to be of a nature not readily to be answered from a handy monograph and vary from the extensive to the minute. Sometimes they lead down strange paths, as for instance when a nutrition researcher proceeded

from the great pasteurization controversy to an inquiry into the dietetic laws of the Doukhobors. The great bulk of the inquiries arises, however, from the socio-economic problems which administration, both central and local, finds itself increasingly obliged to confront. A truly random sample, a baker's dozen of inquiries, picked from various years, may serve as conclusion to this paper and as an index to one side of the work of the M.R.L.

Foundry cost accounting; Acidity and fatty content of milk; Government subsidies to hospital services in the Dominions; Bathroom fatality statistics; Hydraulic couplings; Constitution of the "Oslo breakfast" and children's average gain in weight; Technique of Gallup and other straw polls; Fire-resistance of linoleum; Definition of a public school; Statistical theory of compensating errors; Licensing of fumigators; Registration of charities; What French local government unit corresponds to a Union Province?

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Offered. Colonel H. F. N. Jourdain has a few sets left of his work *The Connaught rangers*, London, 1924-28, 3v., illus., maps, which he is willing to dispose of to South African libraries at the nominal sum of £1 plus postage 5/- (published price £5). The regiment took part in the capture of the Cape in 1795, and served in the Native Wars of 1877-79, the First Boer War, 1880-81, and the South African War, 1899-1902.

Colonel Jourdain's address is Fyfield Lodge, Fyfield Road, Oxford, England.

A New Society. In our last number appeared an announcement that a society for the advancement of the graphic arts was about to be formed in Johan-

nesburg. Under the name of the IMPRINT SOCIETY, it was inaugurated at a meeting held on Friday, 2. June. The new society should be of special interest to librarians, as it intends to do all within its power to stimulate public interest in good typography and book production, and to encourage printers to produce better work.

The second meeting was held on Wednesday, 5. July, in the room of the Transvaal Art Society, Stuttard's Chambers, Rissik Street, Johannesburg, and consisted of a symposium on the aims and objects of the Imprint Society, in which Messrs. Albert Coetzee, A. Hendriks, R. F. Kennedy, and W. R. Kiloh took part.

CITY OF JOHANNESBURG PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE Johannesburg Public Library urgently needs the periodical parts listed below to complete sets in the Reference Library. The majority of these parts were lost through enemy action and are now out of print. Will any reader who has spare copies either to give or to sell to the Library please communicate with the Librarian or the Reference Librarian?

Aeronautics: Vol. 3, no. 3 (October 1940); vol. 4, nos. 1, 2 (February, March 1941).

**American library association bulletin*: August 1939. (Vol. 33, no. 8).

**Architect & building news*: No. 3870 (February 1943).

**Automotive industries*: Indexes for vols. 76 to 85 (January 1937 to December 1941).

Chemical age: Vol. 45, nos. 1166 to 1170 (November 1941). Vol. 46, nos. 1180, 1182 (February 1942).

**Chemistry & industry*: Vol. 62, no. 20 (May 1943).

Country life: Vol. 92, no. 2387 (16. October 1942).

East Africa & Rhodesia: Vol. 17, no. 874 (June 1941).

Economist: Vol. 142, no. 5157 (27. June 1942).

Electrician: Vol. 128, nos. 3295, 3309, 3311 (25. July, 31. October, 14. November 1941); vol. 130, no. 3377 (February 1943).

Field: Vol. 181, no. 4705 (February 1943).

Foundry trade journal: Vol. 60, nos. 1169, 1173 (12. January, 9. February 1939).

**Horizon*: Vol. 1, no. 1 (January 1940); vol. 3, no. 15 (March 1941); vol. 4, no. 23 (November 1941).

**Lancet*: No. 6234 (February 1943).

**Mining journal*: Vol. 220, nos. 5608, 5609 (February 1943).

**Power*: Vol. 85, no. 5 (May 1941).

Roads & streets: Vol. 82 (1939) Index.

Science & art of mining: Vol. 51, nos. 10, 16, 18 (November 1940, February, March 1941).

Scientific worker: Vol. 11, no. 1 (July 1939); vol. 12, nos. 4, 5 (April, May 1940); vol. 13 nos. 1, 3, 9 (January, March, Sept. 1941).

Scott's monthly journal: Vol. 22, no. 9 (November 1941).

U.S. Mines. Mineral trade notes: Vol. 4, no. 4 (April 1937); vol. 5, nos. 1, 3, 5 (July, September, November 1937).

U.S. Mines. Report of investigations: No. 2396.

**Value world*: Vol. 38, no. 6 (December 1941).

* Also required by Witwatersrand University Library.

THE BULAWAYO PUBLIC LIBRARY

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIBRARY

D. NIVEN, O.B.E., F.L.A.

1896-1906

The Bulawayo Public Library was founded in 1896 when a deputation of citizens met Mr. Rhodes and financial arrangements (totally inadequate) were made to carry on the work.

In 1897, the western half of Stand 1,100 was granted by the Government for a library building. The offer and acceptance of this small piece of land shows there was little appreciation on either side of the needs and probable growth of a Public Library. In the Deed of Transfer provision was made for return of the land to the Government if the Bulawayo Public Library ceased to exist for the purposes for which it was instituted. The eastern half of the same stand was granted to three other public bodies—the Bulawayo Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Mines, and the Landowners' and Farmers' Association—each holding a one-third undivided interest.

With a sum of £5,000 borrowed from the British South Africa Company and bearing interest charges at the rate of 6 per cent per annum, the Committee arranged for the erection of a building which in planning had every possible fault that could be found in library planning of the period. The plan had to be drafted to provide office accommodation for the bodies holding the eastern half of the stand.

Shortly after the building was erected (1898) the Library was in financial difficulties and became involved in an expensive law suit owing to defective work on the building which necessitated the borrowing of a further sum of money to make the building secure.

In 1903, the Government agreed to give the Library a grant of not less than £300 per annum, on the £ for £ principle on subscriptions received, with a maximum of £400, and the British South Africa Company agreed to forego interest on the amount borrowed, but in 1905 the Government grant was reduced to £200 notwithstanding that the amount of subscriptions received was in excess of the promised minimum grant of £300.

1906-1915

In 1906, the Library was faced with an almost hopeless financial position, and in 1907, on the

suggestion of the present Librarian, the Government were asked to take over the building in satisfaction of the debt and to grant the Library accommodation at a nominal rental for a number of years. At the same time it was suggested that the Municipal authorities should allocate a town site for a Public Library building. These negotiations were started with a view to placing the Library in a position to enable application to be made to the late Andrew Carnegie for a suitable library building. The conditions of the Carnegie grants for library buildings at that time were that the local authority should provide a site and undertake to maintain the library in a state of efficiency for all time. Neither the Government nor the Municipality would move in the matter and the idea of obtaining a Carnegie building had to be dropped.

Despite the financial difficulties, and through the exercise of the most rigid economy in administration the Library made some progress. The steel stack bookcases at present in use were installed and the building had to be further strengthened to carry the additional weight of the steel equipment and the growing collection of books. The planning of the Library was altered to provide a Public Reading Room, a Subscribers' Reading Room, and accommodation for a collection of quick reference books for the use of the public.

During this period the Government grant was further reduced to £125 per annum.

1916-1926

In 1916, the Librarian gave an address on library work in Southern Rhodesia advocating the establishing of a State or National Library, library service to schools, and the preservation of local literature. This resulted in the promulgation of the Libraries Ordinance in 1918, making provision for the collecting of local literature, but without additional assistance from the Government to promote this activity. (This Ordinance was superseded in 1938 by the Printed Publications Act).

In 1919, negotiations commenced on the question of the debt due to the British South Africa Company and resulted in a compromise being arrived at whereby £1,500 of the debt was waived

to recompense the Library for the loss through reduction of Government grants and it was agreed that the Government grant would be £400 per annum of which £300 was to be allocated to reduction of the debt and payment of interest at 5 per cent, the Library retaining £100 for administration purposes. At the same time the proviso in the Deed of Transfer, relating to reversion of land, was cancelled.

There was further expansion of Library activity, and alteration to the plan of the building became necessary. In 1922 additional accommodation had to be provided for a new Public Reading Room at a cost of £1,600, towards which a grant of £500 was obtained from the Rhodes Trust through the good offices of Sir Otto Beit.

The question of providing additional accommodation was always present, and when the opportunity occurred in 1922, the holdings of the Chamber of Mines and the Landowners' and Farmers' Association in the eastern half of Stand 1,100 were purchased.

During this period the Librarian was asked to reorganize the Queen Victoria Memorial, Salisbury, and to give advice on the promoting of the Legislative Library and the Teachers' Reference Library. Advice was also given on the equipment for the Prince Edward School Library and on library administration to the Libraries at Umtali, Gwelo, Bindura, and Fort Victoria. School libraries and the formation of an Archives Department were also discussed with the Government but no action was taken.

1927-1938

In 1927 it became known that the Trustees of the Carnegie Corporation of New York were arranging to send representatives to the Union of South Africa to make a survey of the library situation and to report on the most suitable means of extending the benefits of modern library service.

The Librarian secured the inclusion of Southern Rhodesia in the survey and the representatives of the Corporation arrived in the Colony in 1928. After completing their survey, which included conferences with Government and Library representatives, the Librarian was asked to formulate a scheme for library development in the Colony. The scheme submitted was considered at a conference held in Salisbury and was approved. The Librarian was asked to attend a conference of librarians held at Bloemfontein in 1928 at which a scheme was adopted similar to the one proposed for Southern Rhodesia.

The Corporation's representatives recommended that Southern Rhodesia should be given a grant of £1,500 for capital expenditure and £1,000 per annum for five years in support of the library development scheme.

Owing to the trade depression in the United States the Corporation had to curtail expenditure and could not see their way to make a grant of more than \$12,500 which was offered to the Government on condition that a National Free Library System would be adopted.

The grant was less than had been expected, and further conferences revealed that the Government were not prepared to support the entirely free library system which the Corporation demanded. Representatives of library interests in the Colony agreed that a free library system could not be adopted without assurance of financial support from the Government, and the original scheme had to be abandoned.

The Government then asked the Librarian to formulate a scheme that would not involve loss of revenue from subscriptions and at the same time meet, to some extent, the conditions laid down by the Corporation.

Further conferences were held and finally the Librarian's modified scheme was accepted and the Minister of Internal Affairs submitted it to the Carnegie Corporation Trustees who hesitated to accept this as it was not the entirely free library system which they wished to see adopted.

Later, Dr. Keppel, President of the Corporation, visited Salisbury, and the Librarian took the opportunity to meet him and discuss the position, after which Dr. Keppel stated that the proposals put forward would again receive the attention of the Trustees.

Anticipating development and realizing from past experience that little progress could be expected while the libraries were in debt, the Librarian secured a grant of £1,000 from the Beit Trustees to assist in removing this encumbrance. The grant was given on the £ for £ principle and resulted in the debts of the Salisbury and Gwelo Libraries being reduced and the debt of the Bulawayo Public Library (incurred with the British South Africa Company in 1897) and that of the Gatooma Library being liquidated.

Again the growth of the Library and its activities called for consideration of the question of additional accommodation, and the Librarian submitted a plan for a new Library building, to be adjoined to the old building, on the eastern half of Stand 1,100.

Negotiations with the Bulawayo Chamber of

Commerce secured the Chamber's one-third interest in the land, and with about £1,000 in hand this new project was started.

Application to the Trustees of the Beit Railway Trust secured a generous grant of £4,000, the Municipality of Bulawayo contributed a total grant of £600 spread over several years, and the Government contributed £250.

The new building and renovations of the old building cost approximately £12,000, and the new Library premises were officially opened in 1934.

During this period the City Council of Salisbury invited the Librarian to advise on matters appertaining to a proposed new Municipal Library in Salisbury. A report and plans for the building were submitted, but owing to the outbreak of war further action was postponed. The Librarian was consulted by the Beit Trustees regarding the plan proposed for a new Library at Umtali. The plan proposed was unsatisfactory and the Librarian's alterations were accepted. The Committee of the Gwelo Library also consulted the Librarian regarding alterations in planning and his suggestions were adopted. Advice was also given to several other libraries on matters of library administration.

The Government Archives Department was instituted and the Librarian was appointed a member of the Archives Commission.

1939-1943

The Librarian's modified scheme for National Free Library Service was finally accepted by the Carnegie Corporation Trustees in 1939 and the Government received payment of the grant of \$12,500.

In submitting the scheme to the Carnegie Corporation the Minister of Internal Affairs said :

"The proposal is not to interfere with existing library arrangements, but that the grant of the Corporation be devoted to the purchase of books of an educational character to be in charge of the Bulawayo Library as the National Library of the Country for free issue on loan to other libraries or individuals."

In acknowledging receipt of the grant to Dr. Keppel, the Minister said :

"... on behalf of the Government I desire to express our sincere appreciation of the generosity of the Corporation and our thanks to you for your interest in the matter. It is scarcely necessary to assure you that this grant will be of the greatest assistance to the development of our libraries and will be much appreciated by the people of the Colony."

The grant of \$12,500 was transferred to the

Bulawayo Public Library and a Sub-Committee was appointed to go into the whole matter and submit recommendations to the Government. The Sub-Committee consisted of the Hon. A. R. Welsh, Chairman, the Hon. Mr. Justice Hudson, Col. J. B. Brady, Messrs. H. H. Davies, and D. Niven. The Sub-Committee reported, recommending the scheme and submitting an estimate of expenditure for three years.

Unfortunately, owing to the outbreak of war the main scheme was allowed to stand over, but with the consent of the Corporation Trustees it was agreed to proceed with that part of the scheme which provided for the free loan of textbooks to candidates entering for the Southern Rhodesia Government Civil Service Examinations.

In Parliament during May 1943 the question of supply of textbooks for students was raised and the Minister of Finance concluded the debate by stating that he would be glad to receive a practicable scheme. The Minister's attention was drawn to the Report of the Sub-Committee submitted in 1939.

In July the Government offered a measure of support for the National Library Scheme. This was considered by the Committee (including Captain T. H. W. Beadle, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, and Mr. A. G. Cowling, Chief Education Officer, who were appointed members of the Committee). Counter-proposals were submitted by the Committee, and in November the Government decided, as from January 1944, to provide the administrative costs of the scheme. The work of organizing the service is now proceeding.

Briefly, the main feature of the scheme is to lend books of an educational character, free of charge, to students and others throughout the Colony who require them for study for examinations or for self-education.

The Bulawayo Public Library stock of books will form the nucleus of the National Library Service, and its equipment and central situation will contribute greatly towards the working of the service. The funds of the Carnegie Corporation Grant will be used to purchase additional books for the service.

When the collections are ready for public use the issue of books will be governed by rules (to be approved by the Committee) detailing the conditions under which books will be loaned and the provisions for safeguarding the collections against loss or damage.

It is unfortunate that the work of organizing the National Library Service has been so long

delayed, as under present conditions it entails further delay in surmounting difficulties of supply due to destruction of books by enemy action and the dictates of economic conditions overseas. Notwithstanding this it is hoped that, within a reasonable period, the service will be able to meet a fair percentage of any demands it may have to face.

Despite the delay and, at this stage, the modified service, there is some satisfaction in the fact that a step has been taken towards providing a service which in other countries, and for many years, has been regarded as an essential public service. To-day, more than ever, it is recognized that any hopes we may entertain for the improvement of educational standards, a better understanding of the social and economic problems of our times, the fullness of individual living, and the more fruitful employment of leisure, all pre-suppose free and full access to books and information, and the Public Library service has proved to be the best means whereby books and information can be made accessible to all members of the community.

* * *

The Trustees of the Beit Bequest (the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance) decided to establish a circulating library for schools and the Librarian was invited to undertake the organization and control of the Library.

The Beit Central Library for Schools was created and the Librarian was appointed Government Buying Agent for Government school libraries. The Library supplies all Government primary schools with collections of books as often as required and the Committee allocate grants to all Government high schools for the purchase of books for study collections.

In addition to the work of the Beit Central Library for Schools the custodianship of the Teachers' Reference Library has been taken over on behalf of the Education Department. The Library was reorganized and a catalogue compiled. The work of distribution of supplementary readers to all Government primary schools has been transferred to the Library in place of the Government Stationery Office. A list of the collection of supplementary readers was compiled and the books graded to assist teachers in the selection of suitable material.

During this period the Librarian made a further effort to wipe off the debt on the Library. In response to an appeal to the Trustees of the Beit Railway Trust a sum of £250 was contributed to assist in this effort which resulted in the Library, for the first time in its history, being freed from debt.

From this brief account of the activities and development of the Library it will be gathered that, owing to the incubus of debt, its progress has been somewhat hampered and, while providing the best possible book service, efforts have had to be mainly directed towards the extinction of debts and the creating of a home to ensure accommodation for future development. To-day the Library is in the fortunate position of having a substantial asset in the land and building, centrally situated, with a Municipal valuation of £16,430, apart from the value of the book collections and equipment. It is free from debt and has a reserve fund built up to assist in the replenishment of stock, equipment, and maintenance expenditure that will be necessary when the war is over.

O.B.E. FOR MR. D. NIVEN

Shortly after receipt of the above Report, news was received that the June Birthday Honours included the award of the O.B.E. to Mr. Niven. The following biographical note is taken from the *Bulawayo chronicle*:

Mr. Dugald Niven, F.L.A., is the Librarian of the Bulawayo Public Library, and can, indeed, be said to have built up that institution to the position it occupies to-day. He has also been the prime mover in the scheme for a national educational library, and he secured the interest and financial support of the Carnegie Trustees.

Born in Glasgow he was trained in the Mitchell Library there and assisted in the organization of the Glasgow Corporation Public Libraries. In South Africa he first served as assistant librarian in Johannesburg. He came to Bulawayo in 1906, ten years after the Library had been founded, and when its financial position was not strong. He has succeeded in wiping off the debt of the Library, and has done some service in that connexion in respect both of the Salisbury and Gwelo libraries.

He has interested himself very much in publicity for Rhodesia and is chairman of the Publicity Advisory Committee. He is a member of the Archives Commission, serves on the Commission for the Preservation of Natural and Historical Monuments, organized the Beit Central Library for Government schools, and has controlled the Southern Rhodesia Teachers' Reference Library.

POST-WAR POLICY FOR SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES¹

Miss P. M. SPEIGHT

WHEN it was first suggested that I should read a paper on post-war policy for South African libraries, very little was being done to encourage library development outside the larger centres of population. Now both the Cape and the Transvaal have begun to move, and the Transvaal has appointed a Library Organizer as well as an Advisory Committee to the Provincial Council.² South Africa is committed to development province by province, and we are unlikely to get any central control or co-ordinated policy for the whole Union. This is, I think, to be regretted, though there is no doubt that, with things as they are, libraries in the Cape and the Transvaal will develop more quickly than if they had had to wait for a scheme from the Union Government. In a country whose total population (all races) is not much more than that of Greater London, it would seem uneconomic to have two, and eventually perhaps four independent, unco-ordinated organizations at work. But the die is cast, and it would be futile to suggest a national policy on lines similar to those advocated by the (British) Library Association.

We can, however, still formulate a national policy for certain branches of our activities, and I should like to make some suggestions under three headings: publicity; professional education; and non-European library services. Publicity is of great importance, because, unless we can make public opinion "library-conscious", it is extremely improbable that adequate financial support will be given to any scheme of library development. Those of you who have read McColvin's *Report* on the public library system of Great Britain will recall his plan for dividing the country into library districts of between 250,000 and 750,000 people. He contends that you cannot economically give adequate library service to a group of less than the former figure. Now the rural European population of the Transvaal was given as 254,690 at the 1936 census, and I do not think that there will be a startling increase shown when the 1941 figures appear. Unfortunately that McColvin minimum is not clustered compactly in a small

area; it is spread over the length and breadth of the Province, and the recently-appointed Organizer has no easy task ahead of him. His two chief problems are going to be: getting enough money to run an efficient service, and finding sufficient trained and suitable staff.

A good library service is not a cheap thing. The figure of 2s. per head of total population, usually named as adequate, will probably prove insufficient for thinly populated rural areas. But, at 2s. per head, the amount for the rural Transvaal comes to over £25,000, which is more than double the figure mentioned as the probable grant. Thus it would seem that the first step to be taken as part of the policy for post-war development should be the organization of nation-wide publicity, nor should we wait until the end of the war to begin it. Our aim must be to make every one—our leaders, politicians, educationalists, and what is called "enlightened public opinion"—aware that libraries are essential in all civilized communities, and that at present South Africa has a lot of leeway to make up.

Outside the ranks of professional librarians too few people know what a good library service should be. To quote from the Library Association's proposals for post-war development, "the advantages of a good library can be fully appreciated only by the community which enjoys it". Each year, the Transvaal Province spends nearly £4,000,000 on education. It cannot be much cut down, for that is what our system costs, and its provision is recognized to be a primary function of provincial authorities. Compare this £4,000,000 with the £2,546 which the Province disbursed as grants to libraries in the last year for which I could find statistics, and libraries appear indeed as a stepchild of the Province. If you believe, as I do, that libraries should rank equally with schools as a fundamental necessity in a democratic community, then you must agree that it is time that something was done about it. I do not wish to decry the work already being done by many library authorities in South Africa, nor to give the impression that they hardly count in a survey of conditions. Many communities have a service that compares favourably with what obtains overseas; but we must concentrate on what remains to be done, and avoid complacency.

Publicity methods are really a matter for

¹ Summary of a paper read to the Southern Transvaal Branch of the South African Library Association in Johannesburg on 2. February 1944.

² The Cape has also appointed a Library Advisory Committee. See *S.A.L.* 8:120, January 1941. *Ed.*

experts, and it is usually found that money must be freely spent to get good results. I should like to see the Council of the South African Library Association appoint a Public Relations Officer, with an annual subsidy, but I suppose that would be out of the question. The existing Publicity Sub-Committee does excellent work, and the grateful thanks of all members are due to those busy, practising librarians who devote so much time and thought to the subject. Nevertheless, we need more intensified efforts, and can only achieve the desired result if all librarians play their part. No opportunity of getting facts about libraries into the press should be lost; if we could get together an illustrated series of factual articles on the various libraries in the country, that might help. What is required is not one grand spurt, but a continuous effort from every librarian to see that he gets "a good press" on every possible occasion. Institutions which depend on public support cannot afford to ignore the value of publicity in eliciting that support, apart from its value in raising the esteem in which libraries are generally held. We should also remember that everything we can do to improve the library service in any particular institution will bring the day of universally good libraries a little nearer, for the example of the good libraries is really the most potent argument for raising the standard generally.

Publicity does not by any means end with press notices, and librarians need to use all possible devices to make their libraries known to the communities in which they are situated. The object of this paper is not, however, to expound publicity methods; they have only been mentioned to make the point that library services cannot be developed without money in adequate amounts (small sums are almost useless), and that to get money we must make people aware of the importance of libraries, and that to do this we need publicity, remembering always that in this connexion the efficient libraries—public, university, and special—are our most useful publicity asset.

The second point, to which we must now pass, is the supply of trained librarians. The concept of a librarian has been slowly changing. He used to be, essentially, an initiate into the deeper mysteries of classification, cataloguing, and bibliography, and though he recognized the desirability of getting people to read books, he rather tended to think that his part was played when readers had free access to the shelves, easy issue methods, and adequate catalogues. He received no special training as an interpreter of books to people. To-day, the emphasis has shifted; classification and

and the like are considered to be the "background techniques" for a librarian whose function has been described as "relating books to readers". He must be able to give the right books to the right people, which means that he must know the literature of widely differing fields; he must be quick to assess the mental powers or limitations of those who seek his aid; he must be sympathetic and tactful. The South African Library Association's *Syllabus of examinations* is even now undergoing extensive revision, but, with the best intentions in the world, it will remain a syllabus of techniques and facts, because no examination has yet been devised to test flair for books, sympathetic approach to people, tact, good humour, and the other qualities we want our librarians to have.

Most of you will have seen, in the *Library association record* for October 1943, the new syllabus for future professional training proposed by the Post-War Policy Committee. It is interesting because in it an attempt is made to ensure, by pre-selection, that candidates without the essential qualities mentioned above will not be accepted for training. Entrants to the profession are to work for at least one year in an approved library before they may take the Entrance Examination which qualifies them to enter one of the proposed library schools. As candidates will probably need financial assistance during the year at the school, provision will be made for grants-in-aid from the local authorities or from the central government. By withholding the grant in the case of any applicant whose work during the year has shown him to be unsuited to the profession of librarian, an important step will have been taken towards training only those likely to make good. The barrier of the Entrance Examination will itself be high enough to ensure that candidates of low intellectual calibre are also rejected. I confess that I should like to see something similar introduced here; with our present rather meagre training resources, we need to select only the best for training.

The most acute need at present exists for another training school in South Africa, for the supply of trained librarians is totally inadequate, and with the hoped-for expansion after the war, it is bound to become even worse. If a library school could be established in the Transvaal, to balance the one at the Cape, and if the two Provincial Councils could be persuaded to share the training costs of pre-selected students with such local authorities as were willing to co-operate, South Africa would have taken a big forward step towards raising the standards of library service. Those who say that

in normal times the graduates of library schools could not possibly be absorbed into the service, should consider the figures given in McColvin's *Report*. Adequate library service, McColvin contends, needs one assistant to every 3,500-4,000 head of population. To use the Transvaal Rural Library again as an example, that would mean between 64 and 72 assistants if it grew to capacity. Even if only half are to be fully qualified librarians, where are they to come from, as things are now? They cannot be supplied from our present resources of trainees, because the bigger public and university libraries can barely train enough people for their own needs. I consider that the question of training for librarianship is acute, and that the South African Library Association should not wait until the end of the war to formulate a strong national policy to be immediately implemented.

The third head of this paper—library provision for the great non-European population of our country—must be briefly dealt with. We all know the difficulties that exist: the colour-bar; the problems of illiteracy; of economic status so low that communities cannot be taxed to pay for libraries; of several vernaculars as well as two official languages, and so on. I am no expert, but I should like to point out that here, in this sphere alone, we have the golden opportunity to formulate a policy, and to plan development for the whole country, because Native affairs are mainly the concern of the Union Government, not of the Provinces. It cannot be said that the Union is very keenly aware of duties or responsibilities in this respect. In 1941 it voted the sum of £300 for

library service to Africans in the Transvaal, who number 2,000,000 or more. That is not, of course, all that was spent on library service to non-Europeans, for some urban authorities have begun to recognize their responsibilities, but it is the sum given to the Transvaal Non-European Library Service, of which the headquarters are at Germiston. We must admit that it is time something was done to improve the position generally, for the percentage of literacy is rising; these people need books and the help in making use of them which can best be given by trained librarians.

The usual course followed by members of a corporate body who think that it is time something was done about anything is to appoint a Committee and leave it to them. This is not, of course, to ensure that anything will be done, but it is difficult to arrange anything else. I am of opinion that the South African Library Association should appoint a committee from among those of its members who have had experience of library work with non-Europeans, and that experts on Native affairs, particularly Native education, should be co-opted. Their terms of reference should be to work out a broad plan on which a constructive policy for library service to Africans and the other non-European citizens of South Africa can be developed; when they have done that, we shall be well armed for the struggle to get the Union Government to give their assistance. There is nothing immediately constructive in this suggestion, but by calling for assistance from those best qualified to give it, we shall eventually be confident that we are working along the right lines.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL BIBLINGS

Fiction in 1942. A review, by W. B. Stevenson, of important fiction published during the year appears in *The Library assistant*, 36: 9-15, Jan.-Feb. 1943.

Medicine in Fiction. *The Library journal*, 67: 807-08, 1. Oct. 1942, contains a list of over 100 titles of recreational books dealing with the lives of doctors, nurses, and the medical profession.

Reference Books for the Small Library. *Cape libraries* 2(3) 3-4, Sept. 1943, contains a "Select list of reference books for the small library". This is particularly welcome now that the reprint of Miss Speight's list, which originally appeared in *S.A.L.* in 1935 is out of print.

Publishers and the War. In "Menander's mirror: liberty in books", the *Times literary supplement* of 7. November

1942, p. 543, reviews the possible reorganization of the publishing trade in view of the paper shortage. In particular, Mr. Warburg's proposal for a Planning Committee of the Publishers' Association which would more or less dictate what books were to be published is criticized.

The Rand daily mail of 18. Oct. 1943 prints a brief report from London on the demand of British publishers for more paper. "The war of ideas can no more be won without books than the naval war can be won without ships." (President Roosevelt, quoted by Stanley Unwin). A well-known figure in the publishing business is quoted as saying: "We try to maintain a proportionate status quo. South African booksellers are getting the same proportion as home booksellers."

LIBRARY NOTES AND NEWS

Albertinia, K.P. Sedert die stigting van die openbare leeskamer in 1935, het die leeskamer baie vordering gemaak, en nou het die bestuur besluit om die bestaande leeskamer om te skep in 'n vry leeskamer. . . . Nadat 'n nuwe konstitusie opgestel is, en die goedkeuring van die Administrasie verkry is, is op 'n spesiale algemene vergadering besluit om met ingang Februarie 1944 die leeskamer vry te maak. Op die jaarvergadering is besluit om in Junie 'n algemene insameling te hou om die nodige fondse in te samel. (*Die Burger*, 10. Feb. 1944; *Vgl. ook S.A.B. 11 : 13*, Jul. 1943).

Alberton. Openbare Biblioteek. Die biblioteek van die plaaslike Nasionale Jeugbond-tak is amptelik aan die Openbare Biblioteek van Alberton oorhandig. Die Nasionale Jeugbond-biblioteek is op 14 Junie 1943 in Alberton geopen. Dit was altyd die doel van die Jeugbond om 'n openbare biblioteek in Alberton in die lewe te roep en die Jeugbond was dan ook die eerste organisasie wat met 'n dergelike onderneming begin het. Ander liggame het daarop die voorbeeld van die Jeugbond gevolg wat verwarring veroorsaak het. Daarop het 'n afvaardiging die Stadsraad van Alberton oor die saak gaan spreek, waarop besluit is dat die munisipaliteit met 'n openbare biblioteek sal begin. (*Transvaler*, 18. Maart 1944).

(Ander liggame wat hulle beywer het vir die oprigting van 'n vry openbare biblioteek in Alberton is die Transvaalse Landbou-unie, die Transvaalse Tak van die Suid-Afrikaanse Biblioteekvereniging, die Komitee van die Germistonse Openbare Biblioteek, en die Biblioteekorganiseerder van Transvaal. In Mei 1943 is 'n vergadering belê, wat besluit het om 'n afvaardiging na die Stadsraad van Alberton te stuur om die saak te bespreek, met bovermelde gevolg. *Red.*)

Bloemfontein. On Saturday, 6. May, the Adult Education Commission visited the Bloemfontein Public Library to see its two outstanding features—the very successful children's free library and the drama library, which is unique in South Africa.

The Committee heard evidence from Dr. David Hopwood, Chairman of the Library Committee, Mrs. M. Rhodes-Harrison, Hon. Secretary of the Committee, and the Librarian, Mrs. G. Walker. A memorandum on the role played by libraries in adult education was submitted by the Committee. . . . Commenting on the fact that "art has been badly neglected by most libraries in the Union" the memorandum suggests that all public libraries should be urged and assisted to form art sections from which books and pictures could be lent to people throughout the country and that each library should try to form a collection of pictures of local interest.

Most of the repertory societies and small play-reading groups, many of which are in remote rural areas, have been able to produce or read plays regularly only because of the services offered by the drama section of the Bloemfontein Library. . . . It consists to-day of sets of 300 different plays. . . . Without a grant for the purpose Afrikaans plays cannot be added to the library until there are enough societies wanting the plays to make such a section almost self-supporting. . . .

To bridge the gap until such time as either the Government or the Provincial Council undertakes the organization of an adequate library service, a society known as the Free State Book Service has been formed with funds collected from various bodies, and a grant from the Provincial Administration, the Society sends out boxes containing 50 books to 18 different centres for free distribution. . . . The memorandum emphasizes that no library can achieve any success in furthering its ideals unless it is a free library. (*The Friend*, 10. May 1944).

Books for Troops. *The Friend* of 20. March 1944 contains an appeal from the Information Officer of 64 Air School, Bloemfontein, for assistance in forming a library of political, scientific, and technical books at the School. It is pointed out that this appeal is not intended as opposition to the Books for Troops scheme, but rather as a supplementary scheme to fill a more particular need.

Cape Libraries Extension Association. The Cape Town City Council has increased its grant to the Association from £200 to £500 p.a.

Cape Provincial Library Scheme. On Tuesday, 11. April, Mr. D. H. Varley addressed the Cape Province Municipal Association Conference at Stellenbosch, and outlined the proposals for a provincial library scheme. (Cf. *S.A.L. 11 : 1-8*, Jul. 1943). The Conference unanimously adopted the scheme in principle. Considerable publicity was accorded to this address in *The Cape times* and *Die Burger* of 13. April, and in *Die Suiderster* of 15. April.

Cape Town. Ellerslie Girls' High School. Mr. R. F. Immelman addressed the Ellerslie Club on 5. May on *Libraries and their activities*. An audience of 60 girls and half a dozen teachers attended, and the talk lasted 1 hour and 20 minutes.

Library commission. The City Council on 29. February decided to appoint a commission to investigate library problems in the Peninsula. This decision was made at the request of the Trustees of the South African Public Library. A leader in *The Cape times* of 2. March, in welcoming the appointment of this commission, expands once again on the backwardness of library services at the Cape, emphasizing the evils of the subscription system, and the necessity of combining the existing independent suburban libraries into an organized system of branch libraries.

Public meeting for better libraries. On 19. April a public meeting, sponsored by the Cape Branch of the South African Library Association, the Trustees of the South African Public Library, and the Society for Book Distribution, was held to discuss the provision of better library services. The Administrator of the Cape, Major G. B. van Zyl, presided. He referred to the recommendations of the Interdepartmental Committee on Libraries, of 1937, to the survey of Cape libraries made in 1941, and to other activities of the Cape Library Advisory Committee. He estimated that the annual cost of a province-wide free library service would be about £32,000.

Mr. J. G. N. Strauss, Minister of Agriculture, said the movement for better libraries had his fullest blessing, and he was willing to assist in any way

possible. Libraries should be a national service, supplying not only the educational side but the inspirational and recreational side of men's needs. Dr. Karl Bremer, M.P., urged that the library idea should be translated into practice—as it could be in the next six months. Even if it needed £100,000 that amount could be realized without difficulty by enforcing a small contribution from every local authority in the province. The impost would be negligible, and in return the Province could achieve the necessary minimum. Mr. R. F. Immelman reviewed existing grants to public libraries. Senator C. F. Clarkson, Minister of the Interior, was also scheduled to speak, but was unable to be present.

The meeting appointed a continuation committee to co-operate with the Library Association in working for better library services. The following members were appointed: Messrs. V. Norton, *Cape Times*; J. M. H. Viljoen, *Die Huisgenoot*; Ian Murray, South African Public Library; D. P. de Klerk; M. Diemont; Evelyn Haddon; Mrs. H. A. Fagan; Professor A. H. Murray; Mrs. Z. Steyn.

It was also agreed to ask the Government to subsidize the Province for library services on a £ for £ basis. A third resolution called for the publication of

the survey and report of the Cape Provincial Advisory Library Committee. (*Cape times*, 20. Apr. 1944).

Johannesburg. Public Library. The Administrator has approved the Council's application for borrowing powers to the extent of £6,000 for the erection of a branch library at Kensington.

U.S. Office of War Information. Library, Johannesburg. The O.W.I. is establishing information libraries in Sydney, Melbourne, Wellington, N.Z., Bombay, and Johannesburg, similar to one already established in London. These libraries are designed to serve writers, the press, radio, American missions, local government agencies, and educational, scientific, and cultural institutions and organizations. They have been stocked with a basic collection of about 1,000 reference books and 4,000 government documents, pamphlets, and reports, covering all aspects of American life and research.

The library in Johannesburg will be housed at the American Consulate, South African Mutual Buildings. The Librarian, Mrs. Florence C. Wilmer, arrived from America recently. (*The Star*, 4. March and 30. March 1944).

AFRICANA NOTES AND QUERIES

African Maps. An interesting article, profusely illustrated with reproductions of old maps, appears in *Libertas* 3(12) 40-47, Nov. 1943, under title: *Africa: the story of a continent in maps*.

Africana notes and news. The first number of the quarterly organ of the Africana Society (cf. *S.A.L.* 11:64, Jan. 1944) appeared in December 1943. It contains a mixed bag for all types of Africana enthusiasts: articles on firearms, war medals and coinages, the South African prints of W. J. Huggins and Samuel Howitt. There are notes and queries on

Lady Anne Barnard, scarce early Afrikaans books, the author of an anonymous booklet on the Cape of 1820, "an interesting Kolbe", "the original of a Le Vaillant illustration", suggestions for "a memorial to the ox", and a note on a Cape goldsmith. The number concludes with notes on some South African museums and the *Annual report* of the Africana Museum.

The second number appeared in March, and contains numerous articles in the same strain. Many of the notes and queries of the previous number are followed up.

S.-A. BIBLIOTEEKVERENIGING, VRYSTAATSE TAK

Soos reeds vermeld (*S.A.B.* 11:40, Okt. 1943) het die S.A.B.V. verlede jaar die stigting van 'n Vrystaatse Tak goedgekeur. Die Tak het op Vrydag, 21. April 1944, 'n vergadering gehou, waarby die huishoudelike reëls van die Tak aangeneem is, onderworpe aan die goedkeuring

van die Raad van die S.A.B.V. Die bestuur is as volg opgestel: *Voorsitter*: prof. dr. W. F. C. Arndt; *Ondervoorsitter*: mnr. L. W. Hiemstra; *Sekretaris-penningmeester*: mevr. G. Bezuiden hout; *lede*: mevr. G. Walker; mevr. M. Rhodes Harrison; mevr. A. de Jager; en mej. C. M. Jooste.

THE BOOK TO THE READER

I HAVE come to you confiding in your culture and I am helpless in your hands. Receive me as a friend and see that on returning me to the bookshelves from which I came out to communicate my spirit to you, I carry a good recollection of your treatment. All who turn my pages will thank you for it and you will deserve the censure of all if you do not respond to the gifts which I offer to your heart and your brain, granting to me your affection and respecting my feebleness.

(Inscription in a library book in Valladolid. Quoted in BONE, G. *Days in old Spain*. Readers Union, 1942. p. 236).

OBITUARY NOTICES

A. M. EVANS, F.S.A.L.A.

THE South African Library world is the poorer by the death on 20. March 1944 of Mr. A. M. Evans. Mr. Evans had been Librarian at Railway Headquarters for 27 years. He started his railway service with the Great Western Railway and came to the Cape Government Railways in 1900.

In 1916 he was transferred to Johannesburg to take up the position of Technical Librarian at Johannesburg and had the task of converting the library as it existed then into a purely Technical Library. Mr. Evans built up an important reference institution which, by the time he retired in May 1943, had become known throughout the Railway Administration and was being used by all grades of railwaymen.

He was also the official correspondent on South African Railway matters to the *Railway Gazette*, London. The methods he introduced were unorthodox but effective, and these, together with

his phenomenal memory, enabled him at all times to maintain his reputation for successful research work.

His likeable nature made him popular with all those who came into contact with him, and the large attendance at the funeral was at once a tribute to the valuable work he had performed in his community and to his personal qualities.

Mr. Evans leaves a widow and three married children; to them we extend our sympathy.

PROFESSOR A. REID

We regret to announce the death on 8. July of Professor A. Reid, S. A. L. A. Council Member representing Natal, member of the Interdepartment Committee on Libraries, 1937, and until recently Principal of the Natal Teachers' Training College at Pietermaritzburg. Professor Reid had been a member of the S.A.L.A. from the early years.

PERSONALIA

DICK—On the recommendation of the Education Subcommittee the Administrative Council has resolved to confer the Hon. Fellowship of the South African Library Association upon Mrs. Margaret Dick on her retirement.

Biographical note: Has B.Sc., M.A. (Hon.), and Secondary Schoolmaster's Diploma, Edinburgh University. After teaching for a few years in England, at Bath and Stoke-on-Trent, came to South Africa in 1906, to take up the post of Principal of the Girls' School at Blythswood Native Training Institution, Transkei. While there helped Mr. Stormont to rearrange the library, which served the outlying district as well as the Institution. Married 1908. After her husband's death in 1931 was appointed Assistant Librarian in full charge of Rhodes University College Library, Grahamstown, retiring in 1936. Attended the Library School in Durban 1932, and became a student in the first organized correspondence courses of the S.A.L.A. in 1933, passed the Intermediate Examination of the (British) L.A., and was given the status of A.L.A. On the staff of Witwatersrand University Library February 1941 to December 1943. For the past seven or eight years acted as tutor for Intermediate Classification correspondence course, and for a few years was also co-examiner in that subject. Throughout her association with the library profession Mrs. Dick has taken the keenest interest in its affairs.

HARRIS—Miss B. J. Harris, B.A., F.S.A.L.A., Librarian of the Industrial Development Corporation, Johannes-

burg, was married on 21. January 1944 to Mr. D. L. Lunn.

PERCIVAL—Miss Lorna Percival, B.A., A.S.A.L.A., has been appointed Assistant-in-Charge of the Smithsonian Collection, State Library.

REYNECKE—Mrs. J. M. Reynecke (née van Schaik) has been appointed to the staff of the Union Catalogue, State Library.

SCOTT—Miss Doreen Mary Scott, A.S.A.L.A., has been appointed Assistant-in-Charge of the Copyright Department, State Library.

VAN DER SPUY—Mrs. L. T. van der Spuy (née van Schalkwyk), M.A. (Opleidings-Cursus, Centrale Vereniging voor Openbare Leesalen en Biblioteken, Holland; and part of Directeurs-Cursus), was appointed to the staff of the Union Catalogue at the State Library, but has since been appointed Assistant-in-Charge of Cataloguing and Classification at the University of Pretoria.

WILMER—Mrs. Florence C. Wilmer has been appointed Librarian of the U.S. Office of War Information Library in Johannesburg. Mrs. Wilmer graduated at Columbia University in Library Service, and then took a special course at the Johns Hopkins University in sociology, psychology, and diplomacy. For five years she was in charge of the largest of the 26 branches of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore.

SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

POOLING OF DUPLICATES, OUT-OF-DATE BOOKS, ETC.

THE following circular has been sent to all libraries by the Hon. Secretary of the Publicity Committee of the South African Library Association :

The Council of the South African Library Association recently adopted the following resolution :

Resolved :

(a) to circularize the large institutional and public libraries, asking them to consent to act as receiving depots for periodicals and books (excluding of course the light, popular and obvious ephemerae), which smaller libraries would otherwise discard;

(b) to draft a circular to be sent to all libraries and institutions in Southern Africa urging them to co-operate by sending their material to the nearest of the libraries listed as receiving depots;

(c) to put forward further suggestions for the publicity necessary to bring home to all concerned the iniquity of destroying books and periodicals which are valuable, and may even be unique or irreplaceable in South Africa.

Resolved that engineering firms and big business houses be circularized, too.

The South African Library Association is anxious to make this resolution effective, as it is particularly important in a country like South Africa to husband our resources, to preserve for future use any technical and literary material which may be of use, and to give other institutions an opportunity of acquiring publications for which we no longer have any use.

To this end the committee dealing with this matter has decided to ask all institutions and libraries having material for disposal to send a list to the nearest depot.

We would like the list to include everything except fiction, and, if periodicals are offered, please state volume, number, and date. After that library has decided on what it wants, the list will be sent to the State Library, which will decide if any of the remaining material is required.

The depots are: *Transvaal*: University of the Witwatersrand, State Library, Johannesburg Public Library; *Cape*: South African Public Library, University of Cape Town Library, Port Elizabeth Public Library; *O.F.S.*: Bloemfontein Public Library; *Natal*: Natal Society Library, Pietermaritzburg.

BOOK REVIEW

The Public Library service: its post-war reorganization and development; proposals by the Council of the Library Association. London, The Assoc., 1943. 16p.

The foreword to this pamphlet explains its genesis. In 1941, Mr. L. R. McColvin, as Honorary Secretary of the Library Association, was invited to survey and report on war-time conditions and post-war possibilities of the public libraries. This he did; when his Report was published in 1942, a note on the cover explained that the Council did not "commit themselves to the policy or the recommendations which have been submitted for their consideration". A Special Committee of the Council was then appointed, and the present document is the result of its labours. In addition to the *McColvin Report*, comments and suggestions submitted by branches and sections of the Library Association, and by various public library committees, were considered.

I think it can be said that McColvin's basic recommendations have been incorporated, and that, if adopted,

these Proposals would give British public libraries a firm foundation on which to build a service equal to the best that obtains anywhere. Four essential conditions are laid down: that adequate library services must be compulsory; that a department of the national government be created to guide and encourage the local library authorities (which will be charged with the provision of such services); that financial assistance must be given where necessary; and that the composition and size of library areas must be "such that the best results are made possible". Adequate library services are then defined, and while no actual areas, such as the McColvin "units", are laid down, the need for regional grouping to produce an area large enough to make the service financially possible is stressed. The question of the relationship between the local library authority and the national government is fully discussed, for the Council thinks that the lack of a central government charged with the duty of "guiding, co-ordinating, and encouraging the development of local library services" has been a serious handicap in the past. They would like to see a separate Ministry set up for libraries.

alternatively it could come under the Board of Education, provided that a new and distinct department of that Ministry were created, specifically to deal with library matters. As inequality in local wealth will make a system of grants from the national exchequer essential, the making of such grants would be part of the function of the central library department.

The next paragraphs of the Proposals are concerned with special services, which include regional reference libraries, inter-library loans, and adequate support for the National Central Library, with provision for a central cataloguing department attached to it.

The proposals with regard to library staff are, briefly, a clear division between technical and service (clerical) staff, the former to be paid salaries not less than those paid to similarly qualified teachers, while the latter should be paid at rates equal to those in force for general or clerical personnel in the municipal service. Men and women should receive equal pay for equal work and

responsibility. Detailed proposals for qualifications and for the training of librarians are not given, but are promised for a report to follow.

Enough has been said to show that these proposals cover much ground and involve a thorough revision of the existing library law. On reading them, our minds turn not so much to actual criticism (we are, perhaps, too remote from the English scene for that) as to the possibilities of adaptation to our needs in South Africa. We are already working towards central (provincial) library departments and grants, but our small population, thinly spread over enormous tracts of country, will make a network of library areas giving a full service to all the people in the land a remote aim for many years to come. Meanwhile, every country that achieves an adequate library service, such as these Proposals could bring about in Britain, makes the task easier for those that lag behind, for it shows them what is to be done.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

COURSE OF LIBRARIANSHIP: 1939 - FEBRUARY 1944

Students who have completed the Course of training for the Certificate and/or Diploma in Librarianship.
(N.B. Diploma awarded to holders of Certificate who have completed two years' work in an approved library.)

Name	Certificate obtained	Diploma obtained	Formerly employed	Now employed
Miss E. Scher, B.A. (Cape Town)	1940	1942	U.C.T. Library S.A.P.L.	—
Miss G. d' A. Dowsley, B.A. (Cape Town)				
(Mrs. Lilienfeldt)	1939	—	Johannesburg P.L.	married
Miss R. Attwell, B.A. (Cape Town)				
(Mrs. Darling)	1939	—	S.A.P.L.	married
Miss S. W. Metelerkamp, B.A. (Cape Town)	1940	1943	U.W.L. U.C.T. (until Dec. 1943)	to be married
Miss C. M. F. De Villiers, B.A. (Stellenbosch) (Mrs. Barry)	1940	—	—	married
Miss M. Alexander, B.A. (Cape Town)	1940	—	—	in business
Miss P. Lurie, B.A. (Cape Town)	1941	—	—	—
Miss F. M. Molenaar, M.A. (Stellenbosch)	Feb. 1942	—	S.A.P.L.	on active service
Miss M. Kinishev, B.A., B.COMM. (Cape Town), A.L.A.	1940	1941	U.C.T. Library	on active service
Miss A. D. Goodwin ¹ (Mrs. Bentley)	1940	—	U.C.T. Library	married
Miss H. Murray (4 B.A. subjects)	1941	1944	S.A.P.L. (until Apr. 1944)	married
Miss M. D. Barrett (3 B.A. subjects)	1942	—	U.C.T. Library	U.C.T. Library
Miss M. F. Barrett B.A. (Cape Town)	1942	1943	U.C.T. (until Jan. 1944)	on active service
Mr. H. J. van Heerden, B.A. (Stellenbosch)	Feb. 1944	—	U.C.T. (until Jun. 1944)	on active service
Mr. B. J. Toerien, B.A. (Stellenbosch)	1943	—	Stell. Univ. Library	Stell. Univ. Library
Mr. D. L. Ehlers, B.A. (Stellenbosch)	1943	—	Stell. Univ. Library	Stell. Univ. Library
Miss E. McConnell, B.A. (Cape Town)				
(Mrs. Saunders)	1942	1942	U.C.T. Library	married
Miss C. Horwitz, B.A. (Cape Town)	Feb. 1944	—	U.S. Govt. Dept. of War Information Lib., Jbg.	U.S. Govt. Dept. of War Information Lib.
Miss H. C. Martinson, B.A. (Cape Town)	Feb. 1943	1943	Stell. Univ. Library	Stell. Univ. Library
Total	19	7		

Only student to obtain the Certificate before the regulations were changed, according to which a minimum of three B.A. subjects is now required.

SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S LIBRARY SECTION

South African Library Association, Transvaal Branch

Vol. 5

July 1944

No. 1

THE PROFESSION OF LIBRARIANSHIP¹

Miss P. M. SPEIGHT

I SHOULD like to begin my talk this afternoon with a quotation from a very readable book—Stanley Jast's *The Library and the community* :—

"Till the 20th century a librarian was anybody in charge of a library. In the earliest times he was generally a priest, and in mediaeval days a monk. In classical times he seems to have been a scholar or a literary man. Callimachus, the librarian of the library at Alexandria was, among other things, a poet. A librarian might even be a professional profligate like Casanova. Some of the librarians of the 19th century had been brought up in the book trade, others were pensioned soldiers or sailors or promoted caretakers. So long as a man was in charge of a library, he was a librarian; there was no other definition. Yet from the ranks of these 'amateur' librarians came the men who created the art or science of librarianship."

You will have noticed that the quotation begins with "Till the 20th century"—so librarianship as a recognized profession is of very recent date. Actually the fact that such a profession exists is hardly known, outside library circles, even to-day. I am in the position of having to explain conditions of service in this library to many would-be librarians and their parents, and the information that qualifying examinations must be passed before promotion is possible comes as a great surprise to most of them. To them, the library is the counter at which books are discharged and issued; they have no conception of the complex duties and processes that are necessary prerequisites to the efficient functioning of any library department.

To enable us to get some idea of the library scene, I should like to sketch a very brief history of the library movement in England. Until the enabling Acts of 1850 and 1855 were passed there were no public libraries in England, as we understand the term to-day. There were libraries of course, and some of them, like the Mechanics'

Institutes libraries, can be regarded as the direct predecessors of our public libraries. But access to books was, on the whole, denied to the people whose economic status debarred them from belonging to the big subscription libraries, or from the privileges of university libraries. There was thus no need for a body of trained librarians; but as soon as rate-supported municipal libraries came into being, a demand was created for librarians and assistants to staff them, and some sort of training was essential, as the collections of books grew, and the borrowers increased in numbers. As early as October 1880, the then Library Association of the United Kingdom, which was founded in 1877, took the first step in this direction by appointing a Committee on the training of library assistants. From this date onward the records of the Library Association show how constantly they considered the question of training librarians. In July 1885 the first examination was held. It soon became apparent that the Association would need to train as well as to examine, for there were hardly any textbooks and no schools of librarianship: I suppose learning by doing was the only method possible. I find it rather amazing to consider the condition of what we call library science or economy, in the 1880's. Dewey was unheard of in England (though his first edition had appeared in 1876); there was no Joint Cataloguing Code; the books stood in their ranks on one side of the barriers, the reading public on the other, and in between the assistants manipulated their "indicators". The function of the librarian was still regarded as being mainly that of a keeper or custodian of the books; his chief concern would be to see that no harm came to his precious charges. But progressive ideas were abroad, both in England and in America; the epoch of scientific classification and exact cataloguing was to come. Most important of all, the concept of a librarian's function was to change. At first, the stress had been on the preservation of books, then it swung over to the idea of getting the books used—used up, worn out,

¹ A talk addressed to high school library prefects at a meeting of the School and Children's Library Section of the Southern Transvaal Branch of the S.A.L.A. at the Johannesburg Public Library on 23. February 1944.

preferably. This is where cataloguing and classification and all the bibliographic tools that unlock the contents of books came in. Librarians must be trained in the arts of bibliography, classification and cataloguing very thoroughly, or they would be unable to organize the contents of their libraries. That is still a most important part of the training of librarians, but a new skill is now being required—that of fitting or relating books to readers. Actually it is not new at all, for I am quite sure that good librarians down the ages have always done it—sized up the borrower in the brief contact made as the latter states his needs, and produced the books most suited to that particular person. It is no easy matter, especially as failure means that the borrower loses confidence, not only in the librarian who has failed to gauge his requirements properly, but possibly also in the resources of that particular library. And so the idea of the librarian as a reader's adviser has gained

ground, and the words "reader guidance" are beginning to appear in syllabuses of training. But we have jumped far ahead of the 1880's, and progress of the public library movement. It is a story of development hampered by financial restrictions which remained until 1919, when the blighting penny rate limit was at last removed. There remained the often painfully slow task of persuading local authorities to spend sufficient money to procure a really efficient service; for here, as elsewhere, a community gets what it pays for. There has also, very naturally, been a great development of "special" libraries of all kinds, to keep pace with the development in special fields of learning. These, like the university libraries, need specialist librarians with knowledge of the particular fields as well as of library techniques.

(To be concluded)

BOOK TALKS TO CHILDREN

MADGE E. GREEN

It is unknown how many libraries nowadays have story-hours for children. Most libraries have tried them at one time or another, and opinions are varied as to their value. The object is, of course, to stimulate further reading, but very often the effect seems to be otherwise, because the children see no point in reading for themselves a story which they can listen to without any expenditure of effort. The main gain, from the library point of view, is the establishment in the child mind of the idea that a library is a pleasant and interesting place which is worthy of patronage. American librarians, as we have all read, devote considerable time and energy to all kinds of activities, children's clubs and the like, in order to make their libraries attractive to junior members. I myself am a little dubious about the value of some of their schemes as they seem to wander away from the world of books, and I still believe that the prime function of a public library is to bring people and books together with as little delay as possible. Children who come to the library are for the most part keen readers and already regard it from the sensible point of view as a place where they can get books. The librarian's duty is then to make sure that the books are available and that the young readers' faith in the resources of the book stock is never shaken. (This

is not always so delightfully simple as it sounds) Extension work is, to my mind, only valuable in so far as it contributes to one or other of the two following objects: (1) to introduce child readers to new fields of reading, (2) to bring into the library children who have been potential readers but have not so far tried the library's resources.

We have commenced in Randfontein a series of lectures for children which, I hope, will further both of these aims. Thanks to the keen interest of Committee members, speakers have been obtained having a specialist knowledge of the subjects with which they deal. There is thus no question of the librarian's having to address the children time after time with an assumed versatility of knowledge and boring them with the sameness of each occasion. Our year's programme shows a variety of topics in both English and Afrikaans: the two languages are alternated, and children from both English and Afrikaans speaking homes are invited to all. At this point I should like to explain how the second object is fulfilled. Invitations are issued to the local schools irrespective of language medium but in numerical ratio to their size. Where desirable we indicate which age group would be most interested in the particular talk, and the school principals distribute the invitations at their discretion. In this way we bring to our

Children's Library a section of children who have not come before, and then do all we can to encourage them to return as borrowers of our books.

Our first talk this year was given by our local M.O.H., who is in his spare time an Africana enthusiast and has for many years been a keen collector of books relating to the early days in the Transvaal. He gave the children the benefit of his reading, under the heading "Early hunters and travellers", bringing volumes from his own store to read from. Illustrations from these books were thrown upon a screen by means of epidiastroscope and enlivened the proceedings considerably. At the end the children were all given details of the books mentioned, as well as of others recommended, by means of duplicated lists. During the next few days, all that the Library possessed was borrowed, the greatest interest being shown by boys in their early teens who had previously confined their reading to westerns and thrillers. This was a very gratifying fulfilment of the first object.

In work with young readers we all too often imagine that our task is completed when we have spread out before them a choice of the best juvenile literature—morally inoffensive, in good style, and calculated not to produce neuroses. We may even lead them on to the classics and congratulate ourselves when they show a preference for Jane Austen over L. M. Montgomery, but this is not enough. Boys in particular are not content with general recreational reading, and it is essential that they be given opportunity for discovering printed matter relating to their own personal hobbies and interests. A talk on philately accompanied by a list of useful books on the subject will do more for the young stamp collector than the help of the most sympathetic children's librarian whose knowledge does not go beyond the name of *Gibbon*. In the case of early travellers in the Transvaal it was less a matter of answering an existing demand than of showing the way to a new and exciting study. I do not suppose that more than a quarter of our audience of eighty children bothered to read any of the books recommended but of that quarter there may have been one or two who have discovered thereby an absorbing interest which will accompany them through life.

Our second talk was given in Afrikaans by a man who has made himself an authority on animal stories. He covered all the different kinds, from

legends and fables of the past to the wild-life stories of the present day, ranging in his subject from Beowulf to "Sangiro", by way of Reynard the Fox and a Malay fairy tale. This did not introduce fresh material, but showed a fresh face on old favourites and was received with great interest. A short list of recommended books accompanied this talk also.

I am appending a short account in Afrikaans of the second talk, and also the booklist given to the children on each of the two occasions.

INTERESSANTE PRAATJIE IN KINDER-BIBLIOTEEK GELEWER

DIE tweede van 'n reeks lesings, wat deur die Biblioteekkomitee van die Randfonteinse Openbare Biblioteek vir kinders gereël is, is Woensdagmiddag, 19. April, deur Mnr. W. J. Swanepoel gehou. Dit was in die vorm van 'n praatjie oor *Dierverehale*, en het in die Kinderbiblioteek plaasgevind.

Mnr. Swanepoel het sy praatjie begin deur daarop te wys dat alle verhele in twee groepe verdeel kan word: Volksverhele en Individualistiese verhele. Daarop het hy verduidelik hoe die houding van die Mens teenoor die Dier in die loop van die eeue verander het. Waar die Dier b.v. in vroeëre tydperke beskou is as 'n geheimnisvolle wese wat in baie opsigte ooreenkom met die Mens, daar het grondiger wetenskaplike studie later 'n groot verandering teweeggebring. Die veranderde opvatting blyk dan ook duidelik uit die verskillende dierverehale: waar die Dier tevore beskrywe is as 'n wese wat kan dink en handel soos 'n Mens, word hy nou voorgestel ter wille van die eienskappe wat hy as Dier besit.

Met gepaste voorbeelde het die spreker nou verduidelik wat met die verskillende tipes van Volksverhele soos die Mite, die Legende, die Fabel, en die Sprokie bedoel word. Die Realistiese Dierverehaal van die moderne letterkunde het daarna die aandag geniet, om weer gevolg te word deur 'n kort uiteensetting en voorbeelde van die hedendaagse sogenaamde Demoniese verhaal.

Lyste met die name van die boeke, waarin dierverehale voorkom, is ná afloop van die lesing aan die kinders gegee.¹

¹ Die lys verskyn in ons volgende nommer.

EARLY HUNTERS AND TRAVELLERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

AFTER listening to Dr. Hamilton's talk, many of you will want to read more about the people and the wild life in our country in the not-so-distant past. Dr. Hamilton has drawn up the following list of books which you will enjoy.

- Andersson, K. J.** Notes of travel in South Africa, etc. Hurst. 1875. O.P.
- Baldwin, W. C.** African hunting and adventure . . . 2. ed. Bentley. 1893. O.P.
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Overheard in Children's Library, Pretoria:

A Junior member who was leaving Pretoria acquainted the Librarian of this fact. He was most surprised on discovering that he could claim his 2s. 6d. deposit. Talking to a young friend he said: "But, John, how can they do that? Don't they make anything out of it?"

John: "Of course, they do, silly, they make education!"

Geography Teaching. *The School library review*, v. 3, no. 7, Easter Term, 1943, is a geography number. Contributions include *Romance of the map*, *Some books on railways*, *Literature of geography and travel*, *Atlases and the school library*, and others. In the foreword Field-Marshal Lord Birdwood of Anzac says: "I am sure that those of us who remember what happened when the terms of the Treaty of Versailles were being settled will recall how much

S.A.L.—S.&C. 5:4

NORTHERN TRANSVAAL BRANCH

IN August 1943, at a committee meeting of the Northern Transvaal Branch of the S.A.L.A., the formation of a School and Children's Library Section of the Branch was unanimously approved. Miss Warren, Teacher-Librarian of the State Library, Pretoria, was asked to convene an inaugural meeting of the proposed section.

The inaugural meeting, which was held at the State Library, Pretoria, on 22. September, attracted a gathering of over 60 teachers, librarians, and parents interested in children's reading and provoked lively discussion. After Miss Warren had been elected chairman of the meeting, she outlined the aims of the section, which are briefly:

(1) To establish closer contact between professional librarians, teachers, training college members, and all other persons interested in children's library work;

(2) To promote closer co-operative activity such as loan facilities, bibliographical and information services, book lists, etc;

(3) To promote better administration of school and public children's libraries;

(4) To hold quarterly meetings at which problems will be discussed and mutual advice and assistance offered.

Membership is free to members of the South African Library Association on application. Other persons will be admitted to membership on payment of 2s. 6d. per annum and will receive the School and Children's Library Section of *South African libraries*.

Mr. Coetzee, Librarian of the Merensky Library University of Pretoria, then spoke in Afrikaans.

During the tea interval those present had an opportunity to enrol as members of the Section and to inspect an exhibition of books for children in the Children's Section.

A committee of eight members was elected by the meeting, four being teaching and four non-teaching members. At a committee meeting held in October office bearers were elected as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Punt, Principal, Voortrekkerskool.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Christie.

Joint Hon. Secretaries: Miss Bresler, Burgher Right School; Miss Warren, State Library, Pretoria.

Committee Members: Mrs. Viljoen, Pretoria Parents' Association; Miss S. Speight, Pretoria Girls' High School; Dr. Nel, Lecturer Guide, Zoological Gardens; Mr. Coetzee, Chief Librarian, Merensky Library, University of Pretoria.

At a meeting of the Section held on 14. April 1944 Mr. H. Orban gave a talk on "The format and publishing of books". Miss N. Warren, Children's Librarian of the State Library, spoke on the latest English children's books, and Mrs. L. T. van der Spuy, of the State Library, spoke on the latest Afrikaans books.

we regretted the very considerable ignorance of detailed geography displayed by many leading politicians. Had the politicians who made such extremely important decisions had a fuller knowledge not only of territorial details, but of ethnological and economic facts, we might well have been spared some of the enormous number of difficulties into which the world has been plunged during the last twenty years."